

## **T-14-1 – “Louisiana Marine Mammal Stranding Network”**

*Abstract:* The Louisiana Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Rescue Program is part of the Audubon Nature Institute. This project was intended to improve network preparedness for data collection from stranded dead or rescued live marine mammals and sea turtles. The objectives of this grant were 1) Rescue or attempt to rescue all reported distressed sea turtles and marine mammals, and to rehabilitate all that can be released; 2) to conduct a minimum of monthly beach surveys for strandings at Grand Isle, Fourchon,, and Holly Beach during the grant period; 3) to develop a survey methodology for aerial surveys around Lake Pontchartrain and to build a volunteer base to conduct those surveys; and to 4) participate in outreach programs about sea turtle and marine mammal rehabilitation.

Raw observation and location data were submitted to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Natural Heritage Program. Several species of concern were observed, including Kemp’s Ridley Sea Turtle, Green Sea Turtle, Loggerhead Sea Turtle, Bryde’s Whale, and Sperm Whale. A volunteer base was developed and initial aerial surveys around Lake Pontchartrain were completed. Collaborative field efforts were carried out between the Rescue Program, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, ChevronTexaco, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the United States Coast Guard. Outreach presentations were given at Earth Day events, Girl Scout events, and classes at the Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine.

The grant was closed on 30 June 2005. A total of \$11,304 of the \$70,000 budget was recovered and added to Louisiana’s fiscal year 2005 State Wildlife Grant apportionment

**For more information** about State Wildlife Grant T-14, or to obtain copies of interim or final reports, please contact the State Wildlife Grant Coordinator, LDWF Fur & Refuge Division.